

Institutional Change in Land and Labour Relations of Central Asia's Irrigated Agriculture (AGRICHANGE)

Initiative: Zwischen Europa und Orient - Mittelasien/Kaukasus im Fokus der Wissenschaft

Ausschreibung: Ausschreibung: Institutioneller Wandel und soziale Praxis. Forschungen zu Politik, Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft in Mittelasien und im Kaukasus

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Laufzeit: 3 Jahre

Projekt-Website: <https://www.iamo.de/agrichange>

Institutional change in the post-socialist Central Asian societies has been characterised by incomplete and non-linear reforms, the dominance of informal over formal institutions, and the absence of a predictable economic and policy environment. These issues are clearly visible in agriculture, a sector that is of crucial importance for food security, rural livelihoods, and the generation of national export revenues. While many observers consider these outcomes as disappointing, from a scientific viewpoint they are also fascinating. The extent of land reform, the degree of state control, and the resulting land and labour relations vary considerably across the region. The reforms in different countries gave quite different answers to the questions of who owns what, earns how much and using what resources. The key idea of the project is to study these questions empirically, by using the example of two regions with irrigated agriculture, South Kazakhstan in Kazakhstan and Samarkand in Uzbekistan. The project is aiming at a more comprehensive understanding of change processes by promoting theory development, and at integrating local universities and their scholars into international academic networks. It takes a long-run, evolutionary perspective and attempts to understand institutional change in its social, historical and cultural context. The project comprises research topics on farm organisation and rural planning practices, rural entrepreneurship and labour incentives as well as agricultural modernisation and collective action. The partners in the project are the German project coordinator Leibniz Institute of Agricultural Development in Transition Economies (IAMO) in Halle (Saale), the Kazakh National Agrarian University in Almaty, Kazakhstan, the Samarkand Agricultural Institute in Samarkand, Uzbekistan, and a scientific reflection board of international senior experts who will be engaged in mentoring the project partners. The partners represent various social science disciplines, including development studies, economics, rural planning, and social anthropology. Important goals of the project are to enhance the mutual cooperation of social scientists across Central Asia and to provide researchers originating from the region a unique opportunity for career development.

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